



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

Leaders Winning Leaders: A Strategy of Growing Faith

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Acts 8:25-40 “So when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans. 26) Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, ‘Arise and go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.’ This is desert. 27) So he arose and went. And behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasury, had come to Jerusalem to worship, 28) was returning. And sitting in his chariot, he was reading Isaiah the Prophet. 29) Then the Spirit said to Philip, ‘Go near and overtake this chariot.’ 30) So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah, and said, ‘Do you understand what you are reading?’ 31) And he said, ‘How can I, unless someone guides me?’ And he asked Philip to come up and sit with him. 32) The place in the Scripture which he read was this: ‘He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and as a lamb before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth. 33) In His humiliation His justice was taken away, and who will declare His generation? For His life is taken from the earth.’ 34) So the eunuch answered Philip and said, ‘I ask you, of whom does the prophet say this, of himself or some other man?’ 35) Then Philip opened his mouth and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. 36) Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, ‘See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?’ 37) Then Philip said, ‘If you believe with all your heart you may.’ And he answered and said, ‘I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.’ 38) So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water,

and he baptized him. 39) Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing. 40) But Philip was found at Azotus. And passing through he preached in all the cities till he came to Caesarea.” (NKJV)

“THERE WAS BUT ONE MAN CONVERTED UNTO THE FAITH OF CHRIST, YET BECAUSE HIS AUTHORITY AND POWER WAS GREAT IN ALL THE REALM, HIS FAITH MIGHT SPREAD ABROAD A SWEET SMELL FAR AND WIDE . . . IN THAT ONE GRAIN OF SEED DID FILL A WHOLE COUNTRY IN A SMALL SPACE.” JOHN CALVIN

How does the emphasis of this chapter match “*all men, kings and all who are in authority*” of I Tim. 2:1-2? What was the purpose of the eunuch’s long trip? Where was he spending his time and money? What are the most important basics of true faith? How do we know that this man’s faith was real? Why was Philip snatched away by the Spirit? Where did Philip settle for the rest of his life? What was the legacy of this wise leader?

FOCUS ON FUTURE BIBLE STUDIES:

- MAY 13-15: ACTS 9:1-15 TRIUMPH OVER TYRANNY: THE CRUEL COMMISSIONED BY CHRIST!
- MAY 20-22: ACTS 9:15-31 TRIUMPH OVER TYRANNY: PERSECUTOR TO PREACHER OF PEACE!

The Apostles, Peter and John, must have marveled at the lack of real repentance on the part of Simon, the leader of Samaria. He had pridefully focused on the external miracles and power to manipulate the multitudes as he had previously done. His lack of faith and obedience is contrasted with that of the Ethiopian eunuch who has been humbled by many limitations and has made great sacrifices to worship and know God through His Temple and who willingly inquires and longs to obey God through His Word and especially His messenger, Philip.

BIBLE STUDIES

WEDNESDAY @ 7:30AM –BIBLE STUDY – FREDERICKSBURG – BOB EVANS ON RT. 3 AND 12:00 NOON – OAKTON – BOB EVANS AT THE 66 AND 123

THURSDAY @ 7:00AM –BIBLE STUDY – CHESTER – SHONEY’S AT RT. 10 (IRON BRIDGE ROAD) & 301(12531 JEFFERSON DAVIS HIGHWAY)

FRIDAY @ 7:00 AM –BIBLE STUDY – NORFOLK – GOLDEN CORRAL, 6103 N. MILITARY HWY, NEAR THE NORFOLK AIRPORT

Virginia

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“GENUINE SAVING FAITH DEMANDS PROPER PREPARATION. IN THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER, ONLY THE GOOD, PROPERLY PREPARED SOIL BROUGHT FORTH THE FRUITS OF SALVATION.”

JOHN MACARTHUR

I. A PREPARED LEADER

ACTS 8:25-28

As the two Apostles proclaimed the Gospel to “*many villages*” in Samaria, revealing their loving leadership and delight to cross cultural and political barriers, Philip is suddenly directed to the next strategic opportunity by “*an angel of the Lord*.” God’s sovereign initiative demonstrates once again that genuine salvation is entirely the gracious work of God (Acts 13:48, 18:10b; Rom. 8:29-9:29; Eph. 1:3-12). Because all men are “*dead in trespasses and sins*,” they have no ability to respond to God (Eph. 2:1). To add to their absolute incapability is the reality that the gospel is veiled to “*those who are perishing*” because “*the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel in the glory of Christ, who is the image of God*” (2 Cor. 4:3-4). Satan is like the bird who snatches away the seed of truth sown in the heart (Mt. 13:19) so that it cannot take root. God had prepared this man’s heart by helping him see his inability to approach God by his obvious Gentile status, his denied access to the Temple as a eunuch (Deut. 23:1), his being unable to participate in Jewish worship or assembly, and thus, not even being allowed to become a full proselyte to Judaism. This black ruler and wealthy treasurer had traveled over a thousand miles by chariot from Ethiopia’s capital to enter Jerusalem “*to worship*” in a very limited and distant status as only a “*God-fearer*.” All he seemed to be allowed was lonely prayer and hearing or reading the Word of God.

“SO THEN FAITH COMES BY HEARING, AND HEARING BY THE WORD OF GOD.”

ROMANS 10:17

II. A PROPER LEARNING

ACTS 8:29-35

This powerful eunuch had probably just purchased the expensive scroll of Isaiah because it was the only book that provided hope to him (Isaiah 56:3-7). As he was reading Isaiah 53:6-7, God brought Philip to sow the seed of the gospel in his heart, commanding Philip to “be invited” or literally “*be joined*” (passive imperative) “*to this chariot*.” Philip seeks the invitation by asking, “*So, most importantly, are you understanding what you are reading?*” The humble ruler admits, “*How indeed can I be able, unless someone shall guide me?*” When the ruler invited him, Philip showed him that Jesus was that willing, silent “*Lamb of God*” who was unlawfully and unjustly crucified as Isaiah prophesied, “*who takes away the sin of the world*” (Jn. 1:29). Philip, “*beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him*,” so that his faith was only based, as is necessary of true faith, on the absolute authority of Scripture and the finished work of Jesus Christ upon the cross to satisfy the wrath of God for our sin so that we can be forgiven as we receive him as our Lord and Savior (Romans 10:9-13).

“ALL AUTHORITY HAS BEEN GIVEN TO ME IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH. GOING THEREFORE, DISCIPLE ALL THE NATIONS, BAPTIZING THEM IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND OF THE SON AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, TEACHING THEM TO OBSERVE ALL THINGS THAT I HAVE COMANDED YOU; AND BEHOLD, I AM WITH YOU ALL THE DAYS UNTIL THE END OF THE AGE.” MATTHEW 28:18-20

III. A PROGRESSIVE LEADERSHIP

ACTS 8:36-40

This leader leaped at the opportunity of access to God in genuine faith, immediately receiving the truth, receiving Christ, and receiving baptism to complete his obedience with immersion. As Philip is snatched away by the Spirit, confirming his word, the Ethiopian ruler rejoices, and by tradition plants a church to lead his nation for Christ.

Questions to Ponder:

- 1) Have you acknowledged your sinfulness, realizing your absolute inability, and crying out to Jesus Christ for mercy?
- 2) Is your faith based, not in your good works, but only the Scripture and the finished work of Jesus Christ upon the cross?
- 3) Has your salvation brought rejoicing to your heart and a legacy of leadership that reaches our nation for Christ?